

Samuel Probst Farm, Farm House  
Legislative Route 18011, Farrandsville  
Road, approx. 2.1 miles northwest of  
Jay Street Bridge  
Lock Haven Vicinity  
Clinton County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5523-A

HABS

PA

18-LOKHAV,

1A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
MID-ATLANTIC REGION, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19106

HABS  
PA  
18-LOKHAN,  
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## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

SAMUEL PROBST FARM,  
Farm House

HABS No. PA-5523-A

Location: LR 18011, the Farrandsville Road, approximately 2.1 miles northwest of the Jay Street Bridge, Lock Haven vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania

USGS Lock Haven Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator  
Coordinates: 18.293040.4559530

Present Owner  
and Occupant:

Charles Probst  
R.D. #2, Box 175  
Lock Haven, Pennsylvania 17745

Present Use:

Residence.

Significance:

The Probst Farm House is significant as a representative example of a front gable-and-wing farm house that demonstrates early-twentieth-century construction and design techniques. The house was constructed by Samuel Probst and local contractor, Clair Chambers, between 1916 and 1918 as the primary building for a farm. The farm house has remained in the Probst family for the past eighty-five years.

The farm house exhibits elements commonly found in early-twentieth-century farmhouses, in contrast to nineteenth-century examples, reflecting the changing nature and less self-sufficient role of the main house. Typical of its type, the Probst farm house accommodates fewer functions and contains only a few basic rooms: kitchen, living room, dining room, and bedrooms. Other common early-twentieth-century farm house elements include the increasing use of hallways, separating the dwelling's public and private areas, and a living room that flows freely into the dining room, providing a large open space for social interaction. While the summer kitchen is an outbuilding more associated with nineteenth-century farms, the farm house kitchen is relatively small and more typical of a twentieth-century residence, as the functions required of the kitchen decreased at that time.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The house was constructed between 1916 and 1918, ten years after Samuel Probst purchased 100 acres of the historic Adam Smith farm complex. It appears that Probst and his family resided in the Smith farm house upon purchasing the property in 1906. Probst and Chambers constructed the present complex, including the barn, house, and outbuildings, between 1916 and 1918, according to the present owner (Probst's grandson) and the inscription on the barn: "S. Probst 1916."

2. Architect: Not known.

3. Original and subsequent owners:

Legal description from the most recent deed: Bounded on the North by mountain lands now or late of the heirs of Joseph Hanna, deceased, and lands now or late of Kinley D. Packer, et al; on the East by lands now or late of Samuel Welsh, deceased; on the South by the low water mark of the West Branch of the Susquehanna River; and on the West by lands formerly of Isaac A. Packer, but now or lately of Kinley D. Packer (see HABS No. PA-5500); containing 100.00 acres.

Except, however, from the above all that certain piece or parcel of land reserved by Adam Smith, Sr., in his Last Will and Testament as and for burial ground; containing .0625 of an acre, more or less. Except also from the above a tract of land sold by Isaac Shafer to Joan Croak, bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a post in the run: thence South 27 degrees East 39.7 perches to a post; thence South 58 degrees West 24 perches to a post; thence North 27 degrees West 35.8 perches to a post; thence North 58 degrees East 35.8 perches to the place of beginning; containing 5.06 acres, more or less. Said Parcel No. 1 less said two exceptions containing 94.8775 acres, more or less.

1906 Deed, 1906, recorded in Volume 73, p.23. William P. Shaffer, et. al. to Samuel and Agnes Probst.

1944 Deed, 1944, recorded in Volume 147, p. 770. Kathryn Dorsey, et.al. (Samuel Probst's heirs) to Charles W. and Edna M. Probst.

1963 Will, 1963, recorded in Volume S, p. 268. Estate of Edna Probst to Charles Probst.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Clair Chambers.
5. Original plans and construction: No original plans or early views have been located for this property.
6. Alterations and additions: The original pantry adjacent to the kitchen has been converted to a laundry room. Electricity was installed in 1936 and coal burning

stoves were removed around that time, with the stove chimneys covered over as well. The dates of other alterations, such as the installation of a modern heating system, are not known.

B. Historic Context:

Samuel Probst, who immigrated to Woodward Township from Switzerland as a child in the 1860s, purchased 100 acres of land in Woodward Township adjacent to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River from William P. Shaffer in 1906. The land had been part of property farmed by the Smith family for sixty-eight years before Shaffer acquired it in 1874. Probst and his family lived in the frame Smith farm house on the property until 1916 when Samuel and local contractor, Clair Chambers, constructed the present farm house and barn between 1916 and 1918. The farm house design was typical of others in the early twentieth century in that it accommodated fewer functions than farm houses of the previous century, and contained only a few basic rooms such as the kitchen, dining room, living room, and bedrooms. The farm house has served as the principal building on the farm throughout its existence. A summer kitchen building, used as an auxiliary kitchen, was built close to the farm house.

Tobacco, orchard products, corn, oats, barley and wheat were cultivated on the Probst Farm throughout the twentieth century. After Samuel's son, Charles Probst, Sr.'s, death in 1958, the production of tobacco on the farm ceased as its cultivation was too labor intensive. A flood in 1936 devastated the Probst Farm. Although the flood did not damage the farm house, the only outbuildings remaining on the property after the storm were the barn, the summer kitchen, and the corn crib. (The frame Smith house survived until the 1950s, when it was demolished for a trailer park.) A 1972 flood did not damage the property as extensively. No water reached the house and no buildings were destroyed. In 1978, Charles Probst, Jr., ceased farming activities and leased most of the remaining seventy-five acres of his grandfather's farm to local farmers for cultivation. The farm house continues to be owned and used by the Probst family.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The Probst farm house is a two-story frame gable-front-and-wing dwelling sheathed in brick veneer with a concrete foundation and a slate-shingled multi-gabled roof. Major exterior features include segmentally-arched openings with one-over-one double hung sash windows, segmentally-arched basement windows, and three brick chimneys. A brick porch wraps around the northern and eastern facades of the house and exhibits brick piers, brick supports and a low patterned brick wall rather than a balustrade. To the rear, the house features a partial two-story frame veranda with turned posts and a squared-post balustrade. Notable interior features include a colored glass window at the base of the staircase and original woodwork and panelled doors throughout.
2. Condition of fabric: The house is in good structural condition and has been well-maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The house is asymmetrically massed with two full stories above the basement and an unfinished attic. The house features a gabled front and wing with a flat-roofed two-story projection and veranda.
2. Foundations: The foundation is constructed of concrete throughout with rectangular panels in the front porch foundation. The foundation above grade level contains segmentally-arched basement windows. The arches have been removed on two of the windows.
3. Walls: The exterior walls are sheathed with brick veneer with segmental brick arches above the window openings.
4. Structural system, framing: The house is of balloon frame construction with sawn members. The only visible floor systems are those viewable from the basement. The roof is framed with sawn members, and the gable-roofed section features sawn rafters butted against a large plank ridgeboard.
5. Porches, stoops, balconies, bulkheads: The house features two porches, one which wraps around the northern and eastern facades to the gable wing, and a two-story wood veranda on the rear or south facade. The front porch contains brick piers and supports and exhibits a low patterned brick wall rather than a balustrade. The wall and piers are capped with painted stone. The porch foundation is brick with recessed rectangular panels. The porch's shed roof is covered with composition shingles. The two-story partial rear veranda contains a concrete block foundation, wooden turned posts and a squared post balustrade. The second story porch flooring is wood, while the first story is poured concrete. Both porches have concrete steps.
6. Chimneys: The building contains two interior ridgeline brick chimneys and one exterior ridgeline chimney. They emerge from the roofs as rectangular brick stacks with corbelled caps. There is one chimney at either end of the side-gabled section of the house and one at the front of the front-gabled section.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: (See floor plans for the location of entrances to the house.) The principal entrance is located at the north elevation and contains a single-leaf glass and wood-panelled door. There is an identical door on the north facade of the side gabled wing leading into the kitchen and another on the south facade, also leading into the kitchen. The same style of door is located on the second story of the south facade, leading to the veranda from the side hallway. Aluminum storm doors are installed at all first-story doorways.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Windows throughout are one-over-one double hung sash with segmentally arched brick lintels. A fixed side-hinged colored glass window is located on the east facade at the base of the

staircase. Smaller paired one-over-one double hung sash windows are located in all three gable ends.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: The roofs of the main section and wing are gabled, while the roof over the rear veranda and projection is flat. All roofs are covered with slate shingles, with the exception of the front porch roof, which is covered with composition shingles. An original lightning rod is located on the ridgeline of the roof.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The soffits of the boxed overhanging eaves are simple and covered with wood. The frieze is narrow, except on the rear projection where it is wider and more heavily defined and the building exhibits metal gutters.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: None.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: (See sketch floor plans for arrangement of rooms.)
2. Stairways: Stairways are positioned at two locations. The principal stair makes a straight rise along the east wall of the main hallway to the intersection of the L-shaped second-story hallway. The stair has a squared wood-panelled newel post and balustrade. The secondary enclosed stair is located at the rear of the house, extending from the north facade in a straight rise to the second story and exhibiting no ornamentation.
3. Flooring: The farm house contains wood plank flooring throughout, although much of it is covered with carpeting or linoleum. On the second story, some non-original narrow oak veneer is visible.
4. Wall and ceiling finishes: The primary wall finish is painted plaster. Almost all ceilings have been lowered with acoustic ceiling tiles and no wall or ceiling trim is visible. Baseboards on the first story are wide with beading and moulding and are stained. Baseboards on the second story are simple planks painted white with no ornamentation.
5. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Treatment of these features is fairly consistent throughout the house. Openings are framed with simple surrounds which are stained, beaded and moulded on the first story and painted planks on the second story. Single-leaf interior doors contain four vertical and one horizontal recessed panels and exhibit original hardware.
  - b. Windows: Windows on the first story are set in simple stained surrounds with moulding and beading below the sills. Surrounds are painted white

and more simple on the second story. A fixed multi-colored glass side-hinged window is located on the first story at the base of the staircase.

6. Decorative Features and Trim: Refer to C.5.a. and b.
  7. Hardware: Refer to C.5.a.
  8. Mechanical equipment:
    - a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: The house contains three stove chimneys, one each in the original kitchen, dining room, and an upstairs bedroom (see floor plan). These openings were fitted with coal burning stoves until 1936 when the house was wired for electricity and the stoves were removed. Presently the house has an electric furnace and exhibits baseboard heating units.
    - b. Lighting: The house was wired for electricity in 1936. Nearly all original light fixtures have been removed or exist beneath acoustic ceiling tiles. An existing single-socket light fixture is located in the second story hallway.
    - c. Plumbing: According to the present owner, no original plumbing remains in the building.
  9. Original Furnishings: No original furnishings remain in the building.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The farm house is situated on flatland and faces in a northeasterly direction towards Bear Mountain. The West Branch of the Susquehanna River, forms the southeast edge of the property. The house is surrounded by a yard that includes, to the northeast, a marsh area surrounded by a stand of deciduous trees; to the east, a screen of evergreens and scattered deciduous trees; and to the southwest, a corn field. The farm's outbuildings are located to the south of the farm house; the summer kitchen and barn are southwest and the corn crib is located to the southeast. To the southeast and west of the farm house is Probst agricultural land and northeast of the house is the Farrandsville Road, which is at the bottom of Bear Mountain. To the northwest and southeast are other residential properties.
  2. Historic landscape design: The surrounding landscape of the farm house is defined by the river. The house is situated in the floodplain of the river, and the property has traditionally been used for farming. Historically, the Probsts grew tobacco, orchard products, corn, oats, barley and wheat. They also raised chicken and swine. The original landscape is that of an agricultural complex, including surrounding fields, and associated outbuildings.
  3. Outbuildings: See short form reports for summer kitchen (HABS No. PA-5523-B), barn (HABS No. PA-5523-C), and corn crib (HABS No. PA-5523-D).

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

A. Architectural drawings: None

B. Historic views:

Owner Charles Probst retains photographs of the Probst House taken circa 1940.

C. Interviews: Probst, Charles. 1991. Interview by Susan C. Nabors, October, Lock Haven vicinity, Clinton County, Pennsylvania.

D. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

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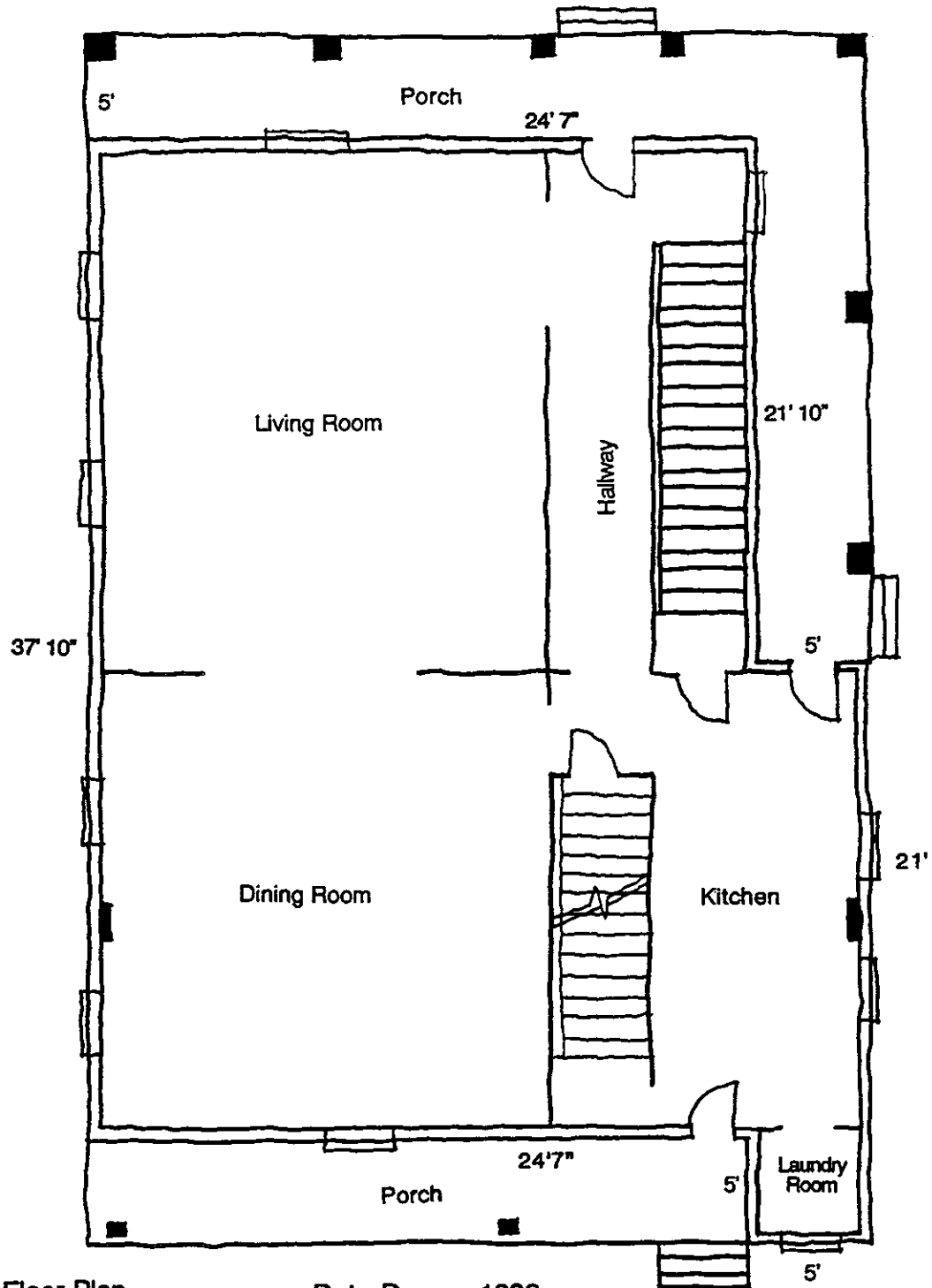
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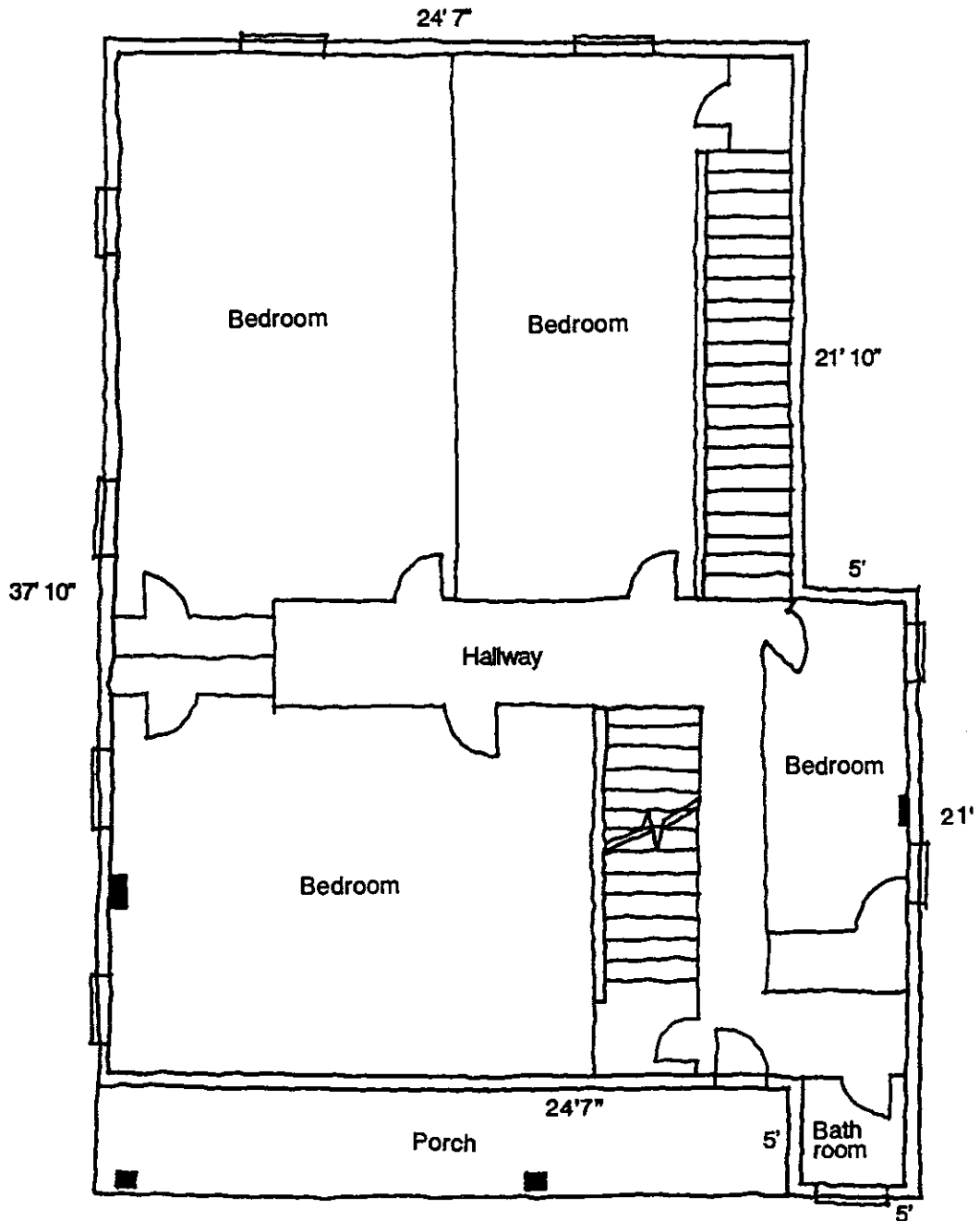
#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

Documentation was undertaken in October and November 1991 in accordance with a Memorandum of Agreement between the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and the Lock Haven Area Flood Protection Authority. The documentation serves as a mitigative measure for the treatment of historic properties that were identified and evaluated in a series of studies and that would be affected by the proposed Lock Haven flood protection project. Documentation was prepared for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District, by the Historic Preservation Group of Kise Franks & Straw, Inc., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: M. Todd Cleveland, project manager; Susan C. Nabors, historian; Martin B. Abbot, historian; and Jill Cremer, graphics. Robert Tucher provided the documentary photographs. The Samuel Probst Farmhouse is tentatively slated for removal to accommodate an induced flooding zone. The building will be marketed for sale, in an attempt to have it moved off-site. If the building cannot be sold, it will be marketed for architectural salvage. The last recourse for the house will be demolition.



First Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer



Second Floor Plan  
(Not to Scale)

Date Drawn: 1992  
Prepared By: Jill Cremer